HARAMBEE FLAME

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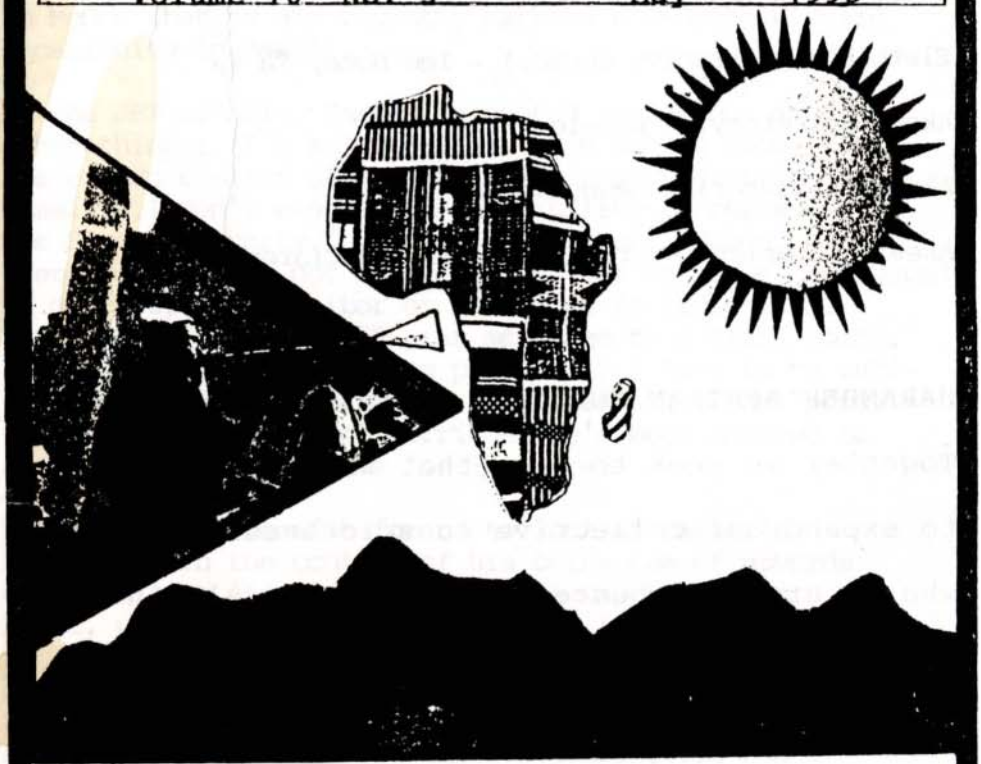

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HARAMBEE AFRIKAN CULTURAL ORGANIZATION

CENTRAL COMMITTEE

Alaga(Chairman) - Shaheed Khaleel Hamza

Eso/Alakoso Asha(Sgt.-at-Arms/Chrmn. of Cultural Affairs Committee - JaRon Dean

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Akewi(Librarian) - Urser Maati Ra(aka Clarence Stelly)

HARAMBEE AFRIKAN CULTURAL ORGANIZATION CREED

Together we seek to know that which is us, to expand our collective consciousness of who we are and whence we come. We exalt in the fact that Afrikans are beautiful in our own right, rather than at the expense of any other ethnic group. And in the true spirit of the Swahili word, "harambee," we promote the idea that cultural awareness is germane to human growth.

Commentary

In the "From Other Sources" feature of last month's HARAMBEE FLAME, we printed an excerpt from JET Magazine about the firing of an African radio talk-show host, reportedly, for marrying a Caucasian woman. According to the JET article, Richard G. Carter and Michael McGee were co-hosts of "The Carter-McGee report," aired by WNOV radio in Milwaukee. Carter was fired after he revealed to McGee that he had recently married a Caucasian while vacationing in Hawaii.

In the JET article, Carter is quoted as saying, among other things: "I'm a journalist. I'm not an icon, a leader, an elected official. I'm a representative of myself...I don't want the responsibility of representing the Black community." He states further: "Nobody can ever accuse me of not being Black. For me to be considered an outcast, or a traitor or a sellout is ridiculous. I resent it. I had a 20 year marriage to a Black woman. I just don't think by being pro-Black, I have to be anti-White." In this same article, JET points out that prior to Carter's most recent marriage, he'd been married to another Caucasian female for 14 years.

It might be of benefit for us to look at Carter's statements in the context of his being one of upwards of 35 million African people in the Caucasian-run U.S. First, what about his remark that he is a journalist, not an icon, an elected official? Don't we recall Charles Barkley telling us that he is not a role model? Charles was apparently not aware of the fact that **anyone** who is seen regularly by several million people, via the television airwaves, **is** a public figure. He was apparently unable to figure out that, in a country in which sports is so greatly hyped as it is in the U.S. and in which practically the **only** African males to get anything close to icon status are "super-star" athletes and other big-time entertainers, many African children and youth--especially, boys--are going to necessarily see these "super-stars" as role models. Who else can they see, via the television, who have attained the kind of material affluence and other "juice" that are so valued in and by this material-obsessed society?

Carter says he is a journalist, **not** an icon, a leader, or an elected official. At the time of his firing, he wasn't an elected official. However, **any** journalist has the potential for becoming an icon and/or a leader. Afterall, what does a journalist do? He or she informs people and influences them, helps to shape their opinions. If a journalist gains credibility and people come to identify with him or her, he or she can readily become an icon and/or a leader. A journalist who hosts a radio or television talk-show **interacts** with his or her listeners. This gives him or her a greater opportunity to shape or influence people's ideas than that had by a person who only reports the news or analysis of it.

But Carter was not just a journalist, not just a talk-show host, but the host of a show billed as "The **Black** Voice of Wisconsin." This title suggests, of course, that "the voice" is in tune with African people, or attempts to be; operates from some kind of African point of view; and is geared toward the promotion of African people's collective interests. In marrying a Caucasian, Carter brought into question to what degree **his** voice could be in tune with his listeners', to what extent **his** voice would operate from an African point of view, and how much **his** voice could be expected to promote Africans' collective interests.

This is the U.S., where an African minority is dominated and held in check by a Caucasian majority; where an African minority is under assault by economic, psychological, and other warfare waged by this Caucasian majority; and where the concept of Caucasian supremacy is fundamental in the majority's decision-making processes, exercise of authority, and in the life of every-day events. And though only a relatively few Caucasians actually make the decisions that have the greatest impacts upon us, Caucasians as a **whole** benefit from these decisions and feel they would have something to lose in any profound change in the Caucasian-supremacist status quo. So despite the good hearts of some individual Caucasians, the population of those folks is one that stands in opposition to us and to our aspirations. This is being made more clear to us as we hear more of the "angry white male," face growing attacks against civil "rights" we won in

the 'fifties and 'sixties, and otherwise find ourselves in greater and greater jeopardy.

Under this set of circumstances, an African's marriage to a Caucasian places him or her in a position of conflicting loyalties. How is such an African to promote his or her people's interests when the person he or she

is married to is a part of that group whose leaders are our oppressors? How forthright can an African host of a talk-show be in dealing with issues having to do with the power relationship between Africans and Caucasians, for example, when he is married to a Caucasian and is, thus, a part of the Caucasian "world"?

Carter would tell us that none of this is important because "I'm a representative of myself. I don't want the responsibility of representing the Black community." Maybe he doesn't comprehend that, in a society in which color is often a determining factor in whether and how one lives or dies, his color keeps him out of any social vacuum. It **makes** him a representative of something more than just his individual self. As to his not wanting the responsibility of representing African people, his firing from "The Black Voice of Wisconsin" certainly represents a fulfillment of that desire. He should have no complaint.

It is ridiculous, as the former radio host states, for him to be considered a sell-out or a traitor? Part of the psychological warfare that is being waged against us is the constant media attack against African women, an attack in which their capacity for physical beauty is questioned and in which their desirability otherwise is minimized by a vast array of negative images. What was true thousands of years ago remains true today. Actions speak more loudly than the words that come out of people's mouths. Every time an African male marries a Caucasian, the idea that African women are less than the Caucasian female "ideal"/standard is reinforced. It is reinforced in the very impressionable minds of our children and in the minds of our youth and adults as well. And because it has become so common for African male public figures to marry Caucasians that many of us have learned

to associate couplings with Caucasian females with what this society views as success.

But we're not just talking about mental or psychological impacts but material reality. Richard Carter doesn't have to be a representative of African people to be aware of the fact that there is a shortage in this country of African males. And this actual numerical shortage is worsened by the inavailability of tens of thousands of African males due to imprisonment, homosexuality, and other factors. Whenever an African male marries a Caucasian, he puts **at least** one Sister in the position of having to share a Brother with another woman(en), to do without male companionship, to seek "male" companionship from another woman, or to look outside our people for such companionship. Does any one of us have the right to do this to our women?

Does it mean that, for us to be pro-African, we have to be anti-Caucasian? That's hardly a valid question. The issue is **our** interests. We must put our people's interests ahead of our own perceived individual interests and those of Caucasians. We must not invest our psychological, emotional, financial, and other resources in Caucasians, so long as there is even one African person in whom such resources have not been invested. This is not a matter of likes and dislikes. This is a matter of the practical application of principles folks follow who are enslaved(mentally and/or otherwise) and who have decided to break loose from their enslavement.

Lastly, particularly at a time in which so many African public figures in this country are so concerned about not being seen as less liberal than their Caucasian liberal mentors or less conservative than their conservative Caucasian mentors that they forsake the interests of their own people, McGee's firing of Carter should be viewed by us an an **affirmative** action.

-Editor

Editorial Policy

The HARAMBEE FLAME is the monthly newsletter of the Harambee Afrikan Cultural Organization(Nebraska State Pen chapter). Ours is a pan-Africanist publication, meaning that we view all people of African descent as one African people, having certain basic interests in common. Also, the HARAMBEE FLAME attempts to be Africentric, in that, through study of the history, cultures, and traditional values of African people, we seek to have and cultivate an African way of looking at things.

The main purposes of the HARAMBEE FLAME are to stimulate and inform. We list "stimulate" first because, more than anything else, we want our readers to be moved to question their/your own ideas, lives, and the circumstances in which we live and to challenge those things that must be challenged in order for us to move from a condition of mental and spiritual servitude and physical dependence upon Caucasian institutions to a state of collective self-determination. Toward this purpose, we present commentaries, poems, etc. These do not necessarily represent the official positions of the Harambee Afrikan Cultural Organization.

The HARAMBEE FLAME provides information because wise people want to know what's going on and because certain kinds of information can stimulate the mind, inspire people to want to act, and influence them to pursue proper understanding so that the actions they take will be as effective as possible. The main vehicle we use to provide information is our "From Other Sources" feature in which we make an effort to provide news about the problems we African people are confronted by and the steps we are taking to resolve them. In this feature, we try to provide coverage of the activities of African people and developments affecting us in the U.S., Africa, and elsewhere. "Community News" is another vehicle.

We encourage you to submit your reports, essays, poems, etc. Please enclose stamped return envelope.

From Other Sources

"Omnibus Counterterrorism Act" Under Consideration

"'The Omnibus Counterterrorism Act of 1995', is under consideration in the House Judiciary Committee...

"Gregory Nojeim, legislative counsel for the American Civil Liberties Union(ACLU)...outlined some concerns [during an April 6 Judiciary Committee hearing] including the fact that the bill allows the president to freeze the assets of, and bar contributions to organizations he deems detrimental to the interests of the U.S., a presidential proclamation exempt from any type of appeal or judicial review.

"The bill also allows the federal government to deport aliens for contributing to organizations which are deemed terrorist, without being convicted of any crimes in court, based on 'secret information'.

"...John Conyers(D.-Mich.) the ranking minority member on the Judiciary Committee...pointed out that foreign political groups like the African National Congress(ANC), the Palestine Liberation Organization(PLO) and the Irish Republican Army(IRA), groups now recognized by the U.S.--could have been listed as 'terrorists' under the legislation..."

-from "Anti-Terrorism Bill Targets Muslims," pages 4 and 5, April 26 THE FINAL CALL(Chicago, IL.)

Portrait Of African Conservatives In U.S.

"In the 1994 national election, 24 African Americans ran on the GOP ticket, up from 15 in 1992. These candidates represent only a tiny fraction of the total Republican Party membership; however, the number of Black conservatives has continued to icncrease...

"Many of the African American Republicans who have emerged in recent years...oppose most government aid and social programs, and instead support:

-An end to affirmative action: According to African American conservatives, affirmative action programs lessen the achievements of African Americans and lead to resentment among whites who feel that African American gains are the result of governmental action rather than individual efforts. 'We're not in the business of special treatment for anybody', says Armstrong Williams...

-An end to welfare: Like their white counterparts, African American conservatives advocate drastically changing or ending welfare programs. They argue that social programs like welfare create a culture of dependency.

-Self-help: ...,conservative African Americans support self-sufficiency and entrepreneurism. Their proposals would put government programs like public housing into private hands. They also endorse school choice(the use of vouchers to attend private or public schools...

-Family values and individual responsibility: African American conservatives say they want to foster traditional African American values, including self-reliance and self-restraint...

"At the national level only three of the Republican National Committee's 165 voting members are African American. Two are from the U.S. Virgin Islands...

"...the election of Ronald Reagan to the White House in 1980 brought many Black conservatives out of the shadows. Shelby Steele, an English professor and author of the book THE CONTENT OF OUR CHARACTER(which argues that Blacks must shed their 'victim-focused' identity), Thomas Sowell, an economist with the conservative Hoover institute, economist Walter Williams and other conservative intellectuals garnered growing public and media attention during the 1980s and '90s.

"Because of their stance on social and civil rights issues, African American conservatives are actively sought out by conservative institutions, publications and politicians. The Republican administrations of the 1980s appointed a handful of Black conservatives to key positions, including Reagan White House staffer William Keyes, State Department

official and current presidential hopeful Alan Keys, Sam Pierce at HUD and Bush Supreme Court nominee Clarence Thomas...

"Williams Keyes and Jay Parker, founder of the Lincoln Institute in Washington, D.C., have established the Black PAC, a political action committee that has helped re-elect ultra-conservative North Carolina Senator Jesse Helms and has opposed the African National Congress, Jesse Jackson and the Congressional Black Caucas. The current battle over Black congressional districts in the South represents another strategic fight by Black conservatives...

"...many Black conservatives, including Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas, have attacked the districts as racial gerrymandering. Thomas has called for a complete reinterpretation of the 1965 Voting Rights Act...

"African American conservative Gary Frank of Connecticut, the lone Republican member of the Congressional Black Caucus prior to the 1994 election, testified against the districts, saying that they...would divide voters along racial lines...

"One target of frequent criticism is James Meredith, a veteran of the civil rights movement and the first Black to attend the University of Mississippi.

"In 1990 Meredith accused civil rights leaders of being controlled by a small but powerful elite group of 15 liberal white men who were engaged in illegal and immoral acts. Meredith further surprised many of those who knew him from his civil rights days by going to work for North Carolina Senator Jesse Helms as a congressional aide, even though Helms had opposed programs aimed at helping Blacks, supported the apartheid government of South Africa, and opposed the creation of a Martin Luther King Jr. holiday...

"Perhaps even more shocking was Meredith's support of the presidential candidacy of Louisiana Klansman David Duke in the 1992 election...

"According to African Americans in the organization(Black conservative group, Project 21), Project 21's purpose is

to replace the NAACP, an organization they see as outdated and no longer accountable to the African American people. Ironically, Project 21's director is Ron Nehring, a 23-year-old white man from Long Island, who claims that the NAACP is no longer in tune with mainstream Black struggles. Additionally, Project 21 was created by the Free Congress Foundation, a right-wing think tank founded by Paul Wyerich, who also founded the Heritage Foundation...

"There are now two...national magazines geared toward a conservative Black audience, DESTINY and NATIONAL MINORITY POLITICS. Across the country 18 African American conservative radio talk shows are filling the airwaves, and according to the National Radio Broadcasting Association, 80 percent of the listeners tuning in to these shows are white...

"While some African American conservatives have tried to hide their connections to the white right, one conservative who has not is Phyllis Berry Myeers, the producer and host of "A Second Look"[broadcast through closed-circuit TV over National Empowerment Television, which is produced by Wyerich's Free Congress Foundation]...One of her targets has been the NAACP...

"Myers also worked with white right-wing extremist Clint Bolick of the conservative Institute of Justice to sink the nomination of Lani Guinier, Clinton's initial choice to head the Justice Department's Civil Rights Division. They produced a number of articles, op-ed pieces, press releases and reports that portrayed Guinier as a fanatical left-wing 'quota queen' bent on undermining democratic principles..."

-from "The Content Of Their Character," pages 29-33, May/ June THIRD FORCE(Oakland, CA.)

African Legislators In Illinois Support Indigenous People

In Battle Against Continuing Disrespect

"Black state lawmakers want a statue depicting a Native American bowed before a Caucasian male removed from the grounds of the state capitol and are introducing

legislation to make it happen...

"Debate over the statue was prompted by April 21 legislation enshrining 'Chief Illiniwek' as the official University of Illinois at Urbana mascot. Student cheerleaders, generally white, dress up as the fictitious Indian chief in full head dress, to rev up crowds during sporting events...

"When Native Americans came to the state legislature opposing the Chief Illiniwek bill, Rep. Davis[Monique Davis, a Chicago Democrat] and several other Black lawmakers supported them. With Republican and Democratic backing, the bill passed anyway..."

"Rep. Davis said if sthe bill passes the state Senate and becomes law, it will be more difficult to retire Chief Illiniwek, even if students and faculty want the University of Illinois mascot changed.

"She believes supporters of Chief Illiniwek called on powerful, white political friends to protect the mascot. The legislature usually shuns such local concerns, she noted..."

-from "Black Lawmakers Fight Indian Stereotypes," page 7, May 10 THE FINAL CALL

A Year Into Africans' Rule in Azania("So. Africa)

"...About 60,000 Whites own more than 87 percent of the nation's land, producing more than 90 percent of the crops. Mandela's African National Congress won power on a platform calling for nearly a third of the farm land in South Africa--one of the seven largest world agricultural exporters--to be redistributed during the next five years.

"A court to make compensation or restore land lost under White rule has been formed and could begin hearing cases in July. But the ANC, mindful of the need for reconciliation and to keep productive farms running, has toned down pre-election promises that major land

(Cont. on page 14)

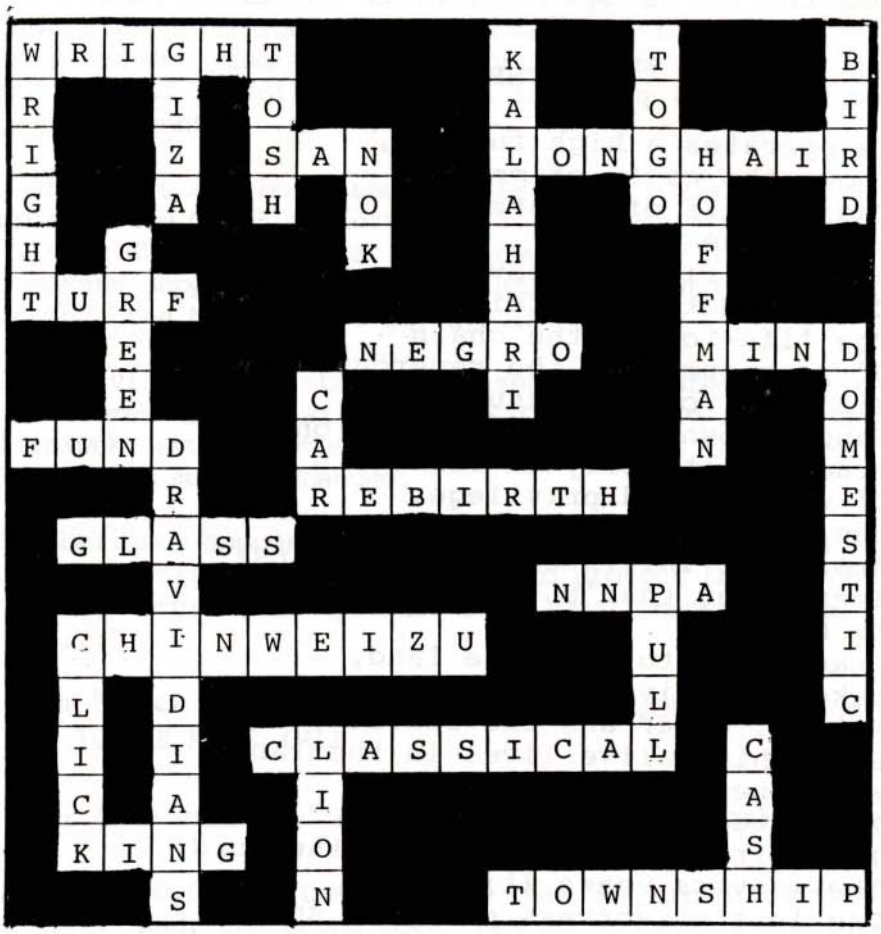
Kuumba (Creativity)

THE FIRE

He operates a high furnace,
Knows the casts of metal,
The secrets of plants,
And of the bush.
His is a ritual behavior,
Connected to everything--
The life-force, the chain
Of consequences, the repercussions.
His is a royal treasure
Handed down, set in prohibition,
Framed faithfully in tradition
Of worship and privilege.
The mining smiths
Are great initiates, the smelters.
Everything that's the smith's
Is history.
Grand the story of the land,
Lakes and rivers, plants and earth,
Metals, water and the stars.
Everything alive lives in the land.
When one goes up,
The other goes down.
The spirits of smiths forge the word;
The weavers weave it;
The leather-workers curry it smooth.
He who is smith masters the fire.

Ella Robinson

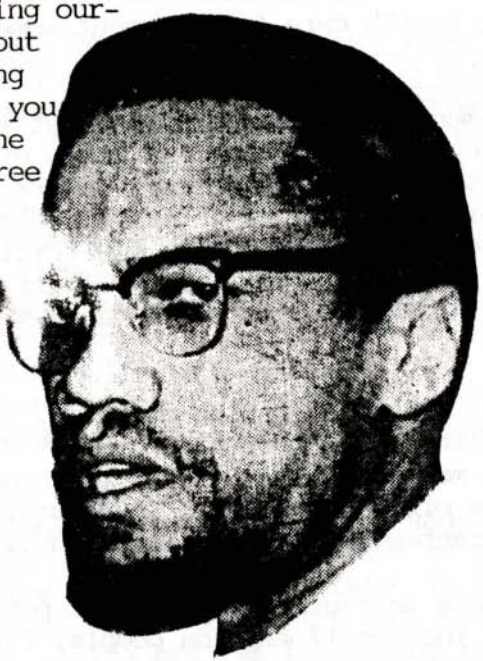
SOLUTION TO HARAMBEE FLAME AFRICENTRIC PUZZLE #5



There is a small goof-up in this puzzle. If you can find it, ...well...you'll get a feeling of self-satisfaction.

"I have often reflected upon the new vistas that reading opened to me. I knew right there in prison that reading had changed forever the course of my life. As I see it today, the ability to read awoke inside me some long dormant craving to be mentally alive."

"In hating Africa and in hating the Africans, we ended up hating ourselves, without even realizing it. Because you can't hate the roots of a tree and not hate the tree. You can't hate your origin and not end up hating yourself."



IN MEMORY

"Now just as you have the house negro and the field negro a hundred years ago, in America today you have a house negro and a field negro. You have the modern counterpart of that slavery-time Uncle Tom, only the one today is a twentieth-century Uncle Tom...He identifies himself with his master so much that when his master says 'our society', he says 'yes boss, our society'. When his master says 'our army, our armed forces', or 'our astronauts are floating around the earth', he says 'yes'...He is never sick until the white man is sick. If you attack the white man, that negro will open up his mouth to defend the white man better than the white man can defend himself."

redistribution will take place...

"Despite the lumbering pace of change,...The explosive political violence that claimed 14,000 lives in the three years before the April 1994 elections had all but vanished in the first 12 months following the establishment of the Government of National Unity. But it has been replaced by a surge in crime...

"Among the signs of real change are a free, compulsory education system and other services for the poor, including free medicine and health care for pregnant women and young children.

"Mandela's government also is starting to put in place the infrastructure needed to reach the goals of the widely heralded Reconstruction and Development Program(RDP). The cornerstone of change, it calls for building affordable housing and providing clean water and electricity to the millions without it. In the meantime, 4 million children in the poorest areas now are getting a daily serving of soup and bread.

"Banks are working with the housing ministry, pledging an end to the redlining of impoverished Black districts and to make funds more easily available for projects that benefit the masses of Black people. In return, the government is guaranteeing their investments...

"The RDP's challenge is enormous. About 42 percent of households, which include 17 million people, live below the poverty line with incomes of no more than $1,800 a year. About 4 million people are close to starvation. About 12 million people have no access to clean water, while 63 percent of Blacks have no electricity...

"In the past year, the housing ministry made a modest start, building 700 affordable homes in the nine provinces. Housing officials also are setting up the infrastructure to finance construction of new dams and health clinics..."

-from "Rebuilding A Nation, pages 27-31, June EMERGE Magazine(Washington, D.C.)

Announcements

The state prison chapter of the Harambee Afrikan Cultural Organization will be holding its annual banquet on June 10th at the state prison in Lincoln. The theme for this year's program is "Hard Work And Dedication: Africans Face The Next Century." It will run from 5-8 p.m. If you are interested in attending, please call 471-3161 and ask for extension 3380. Call between 12:45 and 2:45, Monday through Friday. We need to have your confirmations as soon as possible.

The second annual American Booksellers Association's African American Booksellers' Conference will be held Friday, June 2, 1995, in Chicago at McCormick Place Convention Center-North Building. Four concurrent sessions will be held, including: Black Autobiography: where do we go from here; The World of Children's Books; Black Mystery Writers Come of Age; Black Romance Writers: keeping up with the Steels. In addition to these sessions there will be a special PEN Open Book Committee moderated by Walter Mosley, on "Increasing the Exposure of African Americans in the Publishing Industry." If you have questions regarding the conference, please contact the conference coordinators Paula L. Woods or Felix H. Liddell, LIVRE NOIR, at 213/666-2802.

"The Prison Program" is aired on KPFT Radio(90.1 fm) in Houston, Texas. The show is broadcast on Sunday afternoons from three to five local time. It was founded fifteen years ago by an ex-convict and political activist. The first hour of the program is devoted to commentary and guests discussing almost any issue of interest to prisoners and those who care about them...The second hour is turned over to prisoners' friends and families, who call in from all over this country and as far away as France and Belgium...Contact Prison Program, KPFT, 419 Lovett, Houston, TX 77006; (713) 526-4000 or 526-5738.

Back In Time

The late nineteenth century was described by Columbia University historian Richard Hofstadter as a time of "rapid expansion, desperate competition and peremptory rejection of failure." It was a society that pulled the old trip wire of White elevation and Black degradation...

...a rationale backed by "scientific" reason was sorely needed to explain--and justify--why the rich, the poor, Blacks, and women should remain in their allotted places. Although Charles Darwin's conclusions in the ORIGIN OF SPECIES(1859) were intended to refer to the animal kingdom, his ideas about the survival of the fittest afforded social scientists that rationale. The titans of industry were supposed to be on top because they were superior species, the thinking went. Conversely, the poor deserved to be poor, and if they died from poverty, they deserved that too. Giving them government aid could destroy society, for it would corrupt the natural laws of evolution--the survival of the fittest.

That the captains of industry(only later to be called robber barons) were Anglo-Saxon was both "natural" and necessary to further the evolution of society toward a perfect state. When desperate competition again forced White men to remind themselves what it meant to be civilized, methods were found to rationalize the repression of the "barbarians." A useful tool was the spate of anthropometric theories which determined the degree of "civilization" by measuring brain size and anatomical features. Although these theories dated back to the antebellum years, they took on a new significance when scientists like Dr. Cesare Lombroso, who published CRIMINAL MAN in 1876(the year federal troops were removed from the South), "proved" that men with non-Anglo-Saxon features tended to love "idleness and orgies," evil for its own sake, and desired not only to murder but to "mutilate the corpse, tear its flesh and drink its blood." Thus, White superiority was further refined into Anglo-Saxon superiority...

...the White man in the South, noted W.J. Cash, had the "repulsive suspicion...that he might be slipping into bestiality"...Lynching...had turned more gruesome when,

with the end of slavery, the majority of its victims became Black rather than White and the image of Blacks changed from that of children to dangerous animals. Now there was an evident need to dismember, to castrate, even to fight over body parts to take home for souvenirs.

Racial hostility was especially focused on Afro-Americans who had made substantial economic gains in the postwar period--gains now being checked by the South's counterrevolution, the eclipse of the Freedmen's Bureau, and later the depression of 1893.

Source: WHEN AND WHERE I ENTER: THE IMPACT OF BLACK WOMEN ON RACE AND SEX IN AMERICA by Paula Giddings